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February 28, 1980

LEWIS BECOMES
VIRGINIA SUFFRAGAN

RICHMOND, Va. -- Ten bishops of the Episcopal Church -- including the Presiding Bishop -- joined in a service on Feb. 3 in which David Henry Lewis, Jr., was consecrated Suffragan Bishop of the Diocese of Virginia.

The Rt. Rev. John M. Allin, Presiding Bishop, was the chief consecrator at the ceremony which was held in St. Paul's Church here with some 1,200 persons in attendance.

Bishop Philip Alan Smith of New Hampshire, former Suffragan Bishop of Virginia, preached the sermon in which he urged the new bishop to serve the laity -- individuals and congregations -- "with the large and indispensable service of listening, and the service of loving." He also said that Bishop Lewis must serve the clergy, their families and the diocesan bishop.

Bishop Allin told the congregation, "I present to you a gracious man, who will make you a gracious leader."

Among the bishops who participated in the service were four who had served in the episcopate in the Diocese of Virginia: Bishop Smith and retired bishops Robert Gibson, Samuel Chilton and John Baden. Roman Catholic Bishop Walter F. Sullivan of the Diocese of Richmond was a guest at the service, seated with the Episcopal bishops, though he did not join in the laying on of hands.

Diocesan Bishop Robert B. Hall was hospitalized with acute bronchitis and was unable to be one of the co-consecrators.

Bishop Lewis, 61, is a native of South Boston, Va., and is a graduate of the University of Virginia and Virginia Theological Seminary. He was rector of churches in White Marsh, Christchurch and Culpeper before coming to St. Matthew's, Richmond, in 1956 where he served until his election to the episcopate last Oct. 6.

Bishop Lewis and Caroline Lunt Coffman were married in 1942 and they have four children.

The new suffragan bishop will have an office in Goodwin House, Alexandria, as did his predecessor, Bishop Baden. Bishop Hall said he intends to assign Bishop Lewis to oversight of Missionary Outreach and Churches under Supervision of the Bishop, and vacant cures, in addition to the regular sacramental and pastoral responsibilities of the episcopate.

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